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Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. On 6 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/62, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", in paragraph 8 of which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 23 February 2007, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[31 May 2007]

A nation acting alone cannot ensure the maintenance of regional or international peace and security. All nations should therefore take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of peace. As such, resolution 61/62 is a very timely step towards the promotion of international peace and security. Bangladesh fully shares the objective of the resolution.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[14 May 2007]

The Ministry of Defence of Brunei Darussalam has always supported United Nations activities aimed at enhancing its multilateral efforts in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in order to achieve global peace and security.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2007]

1. Chile is strongly committed to the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. We believe that this is a key instrument for the negotiation of these issues with a view to achieving a broad consensus. Chile is therefore actively participating in the relevant international forums and reiterates that both general and complete disarmament and non-proliferation are important and that one should not take precedence over the other. Unfortunately, this caused the failure of the most recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and affected the negotiation of the

2005 World Summit outcome document of Heads of State and Government meeting in the United Nations General Assembly. That document did not contain any reference to disarmament because of the profound differences between the nuclear Powers and the hard core of non-aligned countries.

2. We believe that it is necessary to continue to move forward in arms regulation, non-proliferation and disarmament on the basis of universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent negotiations with the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament under strict international control. This confers international legitimacy on the negotiations in these areas.

3. In this context, Chile calls for the improvement of disarmament and non-proliferation strategies and hopes to work towards the success of the review of the NPT in 2010. In addition, we will continue to make efforts to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament and work for the prompt adoption of an effective programme of work in such areas as negative security assurances, nuclear disarmament and the arms race in outer space. Chile also considers essential a prompt start to the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. Similarly, we reiterate the need for States to accede to the Model Protocol Additional to the Agreements between States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the Application of Safeguards, and for the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2007]

1. Cuba believes that multilateralism is essential today, especially in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. This issue has attracted the attention of the international community for several years within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 56/24 T of 29 November 2001 on multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and global efforts against terrorism, as well as resolutions 57/63 of 22 November 2002, 58/44 of 8 December 2003, 59/69 of 3 December 2004 and 60/59 of 8 December 2005, in which the overwhelming majority of Member States have shared the view that multilateralism provides the only reasonable and sustainable way to address disarmament and non-proliferation problems.

2. In this context, the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, during the First Committee's general debate at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, reflects the principled positions and priorities in the area of disarmament and international security adopted by the Movement's Heads of State and Government at the Conference held in Havana from 11 to 16 September 2006.

3. It is a matter of great concern to Cuba, and to the international community as a whole, that the current system of international relations is characterized by injustice, exclusion, aggression and pre-emptive and unilateral wars and that attempts are made to justify such actions with self-styled new foreign policy concepts and doctrines on the part of the most powerful countries.

4. The "effective multilateralism" advocated by certain States seeks to establish a new theory about the application and interpretation of the principles enshrined in international law and in the Charter of the United Nations from a utilitarian point of view, with a cost-benefit evaluation of a country's actions according to its political interests. In other words, multilateralism is useful only if it is used by a country to advance its own plans and interests.

5. This precept essentially makes a travesty of sovereign equality between States by promoting associations and agreements only between certain States that allegedly meet their standards for democracy and development, and by claiming the right to decide on the system freely chosen by each State in the exercise of its right to self-determination.

6. Cuba rejects this so-called "effective multilateralism" and affirms that its theoretical basis is contrary to the foundations on which international peace and security must be maintained because it promotes intervention as a norm and principle for the conduct of States in international relations.

7. In addition, the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative is designed to erode multilateralism by imposing a selective and non-transparent mechanism which acts outside the United Nations on the false pretext of providing "a response to the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials". The steps proposed by this Initiative are directed against those States and groups that have been deliberately identified as terrorists using a highly selective approach focused exclusively on the prevention of horizontal proliferation and lacking any firm or resolute commitment to general and complete disarmament or to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

8. Cuba is deeply concerned by the fact that the United Nations Security Council, a body with restricted membership, continues to assume prerogatives and functions which are not appropriate to it, especially in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) are examples of this.

9. The Republic of Cuba wishes to confirm the absolute validity of multilateralism in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and calls for the multilateral disarmament bodies to be preserved, owing to the major role that they are called upon to play in the quest for a more just, secure and peaceful world. It is imperative for the multilateral negotiating bodies and mechanisms in this field to be revitalized and to move forward collectively on the basis of unqualified respect for the principles enshrined in international law and in the Charter of the United Nations. Cuba repudiates the lack of progress made in the work of the Conference on Disarmament and in other multilateral forums in this field.

10. It must be frankly recognized that the reason for the lack of tangible results in the area of disarmament lies in the lack of true political will on the part of some States, especially the military super-Power. These States have demonstrated their rejection of multilateralism and disarmament and instead favour unilateral actions and selective non-proliferation.

11. Cuba believes that it is imperative to carry out substantive analysis and to produce tangible results in the field of disarmament in order to make the world a

safer place and to allocate the substantial military expenditures being made today to the cause of development and to reducing the gap between rich and poor countries.

12. In that respect, Cuba believes that it is entirely timely and relevant to recall United Nations General Assembly resolution 61/62 on promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, which reaffirms multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to maintaining and strengthening universal norms and enlarging their scope.

Iraq

[Original: English]
[19 March 2007]

Iraq supports the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation as an active way of achieving consensus in negotiations and as a reflection of the importance of Member States abiding by their commitments.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[1 May 2007]

In reply to your note verbale relating to the above subject, the Ministry of National Defence reaffirms its previous position contained in note No. 1378/*ghayn 'ayn/waw* dated 28 April 2006 stating that Lebanon supports the adoption of effective measures to counter the dangers that threaten international security and peace as a result of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Bearing in mind the existence of disarmament and arms regulation agreements resulting from multilateral negotiations with the participation of a large number of countries, regardless of their size and power, with the goal of reaching complete disarmament under strict international control, it believes that the promotion of multilateralism is a core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to establishing universal norms and enlarging their scope. It renews and fulfils its commitments to multilateral cooperation as an important means of pursuing and achieving common objectives in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation at a time when Israel's maintenance of an enormous arsenal of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a direct threat not only to Lebanon but to all States in the region, even endangering international peace and security.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[4 April 2007]

1. Mexico is convinced that multilateral negotiations in pursuit of consensus enable positive agreements and progress to be achieved in substantive aspects of the international agenda, especially in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Mexico is therefore joining the efforts to revitalize the disarmament machinery, which has recently encountered serious difficulties in the conduct of its work.

2. Mexico is also concerned by the absence of this issue in the 2005 World Summit outcome document. It therefore reaffirms that the United Nations plays a paramount role in promoting and conducting negotiations on the principles and the system governing disarmament and arms regulation, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Articles 11, 24 and 26. Mexico believes that disarmament is an essential element to include in the reform of the United Nations.

3. Accordingly, Mexico considers the disarmament and non-proliferation multilateral legal structure in place for nearly 30 years to be valid and to provide the basis for present and future progress in this field. The fulfilment of international obligations, verification, accountability and the promotion of cooperation for the same purpose are therefore important aspects. While multilateralism is a concept, this takes concrete form in an institutional system that must be revitalized and improved in order to eliminate threats to peace.

Ukraine

[Original: Russian]
[11 May 2007]

1. In Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence is responsible for drafting legislation and regulations relating to export controls for international transfers of military and dual-use goods.

2. It is also responsible for carrying out decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolutions on the imposition of sanctions on certain countries in the field of non-proliferation and export control, including the restrictions that Ukraine must observe or take into consideration when developing military and technical cooperation with foreign States.

3. Decisions allowing entities engaged in foreign economic activity, product development organizations and producers of goods to obtain licences for the export and import of military and dual-use goods are submitted to the State Export Control Service of Ukraine.

4. Ministry of Defence documents are drawn up and issued on whether to grant entities engaged in foreign economic activity, product development organizations and producers of military and dual-use goods the right to export and import these goods, as well as petitions to revoke these rights.

5. The Ministry of Defence also draws up and issues documents in order to obtain decisions from the State Export Control Service of Ukraine on the international transfer of military and dual-use goods for the participation of units of Ukrainian armed forces in international peacekeeping operations and in joint exercises with units of the armed forces of other States.

6. Representatives of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence participate in meetings of the Interdepartmental Council for Export Control under the State Export Control Service of Ukraine, and of the Commission for State Certification of In-house Export Control systems under the State Export Control Service of Ukraine.